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The Massachusetts Department of Public Health (DPH) and the Board of Registration in Dentistry (BORID) endorse the recent recommendation released by the Massachusetts Dental Society (MDS) in conjunction with the American Dental Association. That recommendation states,

“(a)s the facts and situation around COVID-19 (Coronavirus) continue to evolve, and in step with Governor Baker’s recent Declaration of a State of Emergency, the Massachusetts Dental Society Executive Committee and Board of Trustees is issuing the following guidance for dentists in Massachusetts. The MDS strongly recommends that dentists practicing in the Commonwealth close their offices from March 17 to April 6 to patients seeking elective and non-urgent care. As always, it is expected that dentists will continue to be available as needed for emergency management. This is not guidance we are issuing lightly, and it is being done out of an abundance of caution during these turbulent times. As healthcare professionals, we all have a role to play in slowing the spread of the coronavirus and “flattening the curve” in order to follow sound scientific, public health advice, to help limit infections and slow the spread of the virus. The spread of COVID-19 will be determined by our collective actions now and this recommendation is being made out of an abundance of caution. We believe by taking these extraordinary precautions, dentists can make a difference in helping to preserve the limited supply of personal protection equipment critical for emergency dental care and frontline healthcare personnel responding to the pandemic.”

Dentists who keep their dental practices open are reminded that all licensed dental professionals are required to practice in compliance with the *CDC Guidelines for Infection Control in the Dental Healthcare Setting* per the Board's regulations at 234 CMR. If a dentist is treating a patient diagnosed with COVID-19 or suspected of having been exposed to this virus, then the treating dentist and any auxiliary staff involved in that treatment should utilize N95 respirators and surgical face masks/gowns per the recommendations of the Food and Drug Administration (FDA), the CDC, the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) and the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA).

The below link to CDC Guidance, discusses *Interim Infection Prevention and Control Recommendations for Patients with Suspected or Confirmed Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) in Healthcare Settings*, as well as alternatives to N95s and other personal protective equipment in the event of shortages or unavailability.

https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/infection-control/control-recommendations.html?CDC_AA_refVal=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.cdc.gov%2Fcoronavirus%2F2019-ncov%2Fhcp%2Finfection-control.html

Finally, per the March 15th emergency order from Governor Charlie Baker limiting public gatherings to 25 individuals, all dentists should limit the number of dental staff and patients present in their offices at any given time to no more than 25 persons to prevent the spread of COVID-19.